



# NIPN LEARNINGS

Lessons and experiences  
from implementing the  
NIPN approach



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## 1. Introduction

NIPN Global Coordination, together with its partners, developed six technical guidance notes (TGN) to support countries in adapting and applying the NIPN approach and operational cycle to their specific contexts. These TGN cover the following areas:

1. Developing the NIPN structure
2. Formulating nutrition policy questions
3. Managing and analysing data
4. Communicating and disseminating findings
5. Integrating gender in NIPN activities
6. Planning for NIPN sustainability

Through these guidance notes, NIPN Global Coordination intends to provide countries with practical guidance and tools to apply a coherent and high-quality NIPN approach and address particularly challenging steps.

The present document compiles experiences and lessons learnt from implementing selected TGNs in different country contexts. While all six TGNs are relevant for NIPN platforms, this document focuses on lessons from three specific processes:

1. Formulating nutrition policy questions (TGN 2)
2. Conducting multisectoral nutrition data mapping (TGN 3)
3. Strengthening data analysis using the Lives Saved Tool (LiST) (TGN 3)

By documenting these experiences, it aims to support countries – particularly those without established NIPN platforms – that seek to strengthen their nutrition information systems and explore how to adopt elements of the NIPN approach.

## 2. Lessons from formulating nutrition policy questions

Formulating relevant nutrition policy questions is the starting point of evidence-based decision making. The second NIPN TGN '[Formulating Nutrition Policy Questions](#)' provides guidance to implement a robust four-step Policy Question Formulation (PQF) process. This section on NIPN learnings is dedicated to lessons learnt from the experiences of NIPN platforms in implementing this approach. It provides insights from various NIPN countries and links to selected country-specific questions and analytical frameworks.

### 2.1 NIPN's offer

The process 'Nutrition Relevant Policy Question Formulation (NRPQF) to formulate questions to be addressed with existing data' was specifically created to support NIPN countries in addressing policy needs at the country level. Additionally, NIPN Global Coordination has conducted multiple capacity-

building workshops in various countries, including non NIPN countries through NIPN4NIS technical assistance, to facilitate the effective use of the guidance note on nutrition-relevant policy questions.

## 2.2 NIPN experiences

NIPN Global Coordination has supported public officials from nutrition ministries and other sectors build their capacity in NRPQF. This support included training on how to develop questions and specific examples tailored to each country's evidence needs and timing for decision-making. Table 1 presents an overview of activities and workshops supported by NIPN Global Coordination between 2018 and 2025 to promote nutrition policy question formulation for evidence-based decision-making across several African countries.

*Table 1. Policy question formulation activities supported by Global Coordination across the NIPN community*

Country	Year	Activities
<a href="#">Ethiopia</a>  NIPN Platform	2018	<p>During the second Africa Nutritional Epidemiology Conference (ANEC III) in 2018, a side event took place to test and customise a tool for identifying and formulating relevant nutrition policy questions using available data. The objectives included establishing a shared understanding of the tool's steps, tailoring them to the context of Niger, and enhancing the proposal by incorporating insights from Mali's experience.</p> <p>The session resulted in several outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The team, composed of representatives from Niger, Mali, and the Global Support Facility (GSF), worked through a series of sessions: introduction, sharing Mali's experiences, adapting elements for Niger, mapping political dialogue, practical exercises, and simulations.</li> <li>• The workshop resulted in a review and synthesis of all steps and sub-steps of the tool, with next steps delineated for Niger.</li> <li>• Components requiring modification, clarification, or addition were identified to ensure the tool remains dynamic and team oriented.</li> <li>• Stakeholder roles were clarified, deliverables were defined and tested through examples, and differentiation between team guidance and process was established.</li> </ul>
<a href="#">Ethiopia</a>  NIPN Platform	2019	<p>The first NIPN operationalisation cycle workshop was held in Addis Ababa from 30 January to 1 February 2019. The workshop was organised to focus on the formulation of nutrition-relevant policy questions. Its purpose was to ensure that policy questions are clear, actionable, and directly tied to policy objectives, thereby enabling effective data analysis and decision-making. The event also aimed to build capacity among participants, promote cross-</p>

Country	Year	Activities
		<p>country learning, and support the operationalisation of the NIPN cycle through practical exercises and the use of data dashboards.</p> <p>The outcomes of the workshop included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasis on clear policy questions: Participants learned the importance of formulating questions that are specific, actionable, and policy-relevant, always referring to underlying policy objectives.</li> <li>• Stepwise Approach and Practical Exercises: The workshop broke down the NIPN cycle into clear steps and used group activities to reinforce learning. Well-prepared exercises were highlighted as essential.</li> <li>• Alignment and Consistency: The need for consistent language, aligned tools, and unified guidance was recognised to avoid confusion and promote a ‘one voice’ approach.</li> <li>• Data quality and analysis challenges: Participants identified challenges in data quality checks and analysis presentations, calling for clearer guidance and practical examples.</li> <li>• Suitability of policy questions: Not all questions are suitable for the NIPN approach; questions should be answerable with existing data and lead to actionable recommendations. ‘Why’ questions should be reframed to focus on determinants.</li> <li>• Capacity building and cross-country learning: The value of sharing experiences and solutions among country teams was highlighted.</li> <li>• Dashboards and data repositories: The use of subnational nutrition dashboards and central repositories was discussed as crucial for data-driven decision-making.</li> <li>• Continuous improvement: The importance of collecting feedback and revising guidance notes for future workshops was stressed.</li> </ul>
<p><a href="#">Niger</a></p> <p>NIPN Platform</p>	<p>2019</p>	<p>Between 4 and 7 February, a consultant from the NIPN Global Support Facility carried out an in-country mission to Niger. The mission aimed to support the NIPN team in finalising the analysis framework for policy-related questions.</p> <p>The outcomes included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Six principal groups of strategic questions were identified, covering determinants of chronic malnutrition, their impact on malnutrition indicators, methods for refining sector-specific nutrition indicators, intervention prioritisation, profiling vulnerable populations, and systematic monitoring of key indicators.</li> </ul>

Country	Year	Activities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An analysis framework was developed for each question after a thorough review and adjustment process.</li> <li>• Several challenges and priority needs emerged, including the need to prioritise questions based on stakeholders' agendas, validation through Steering and Technical Committees, and the development of a comprehensive analysis plan.</li> <li>• Establishing defined timelines was noted as a challenge due to bureaucratic procedures and data accessibility issues.</li> <li>• Recommendations were made to enhance multisectoral collaboration and promote evidence-based decision-making.</li> </ul>
<a href="#">Burkina Faso</a>  NIPN Platform	2019	<p>The activity was conducted from 17 to 25 February 2019. During this period, a consultant from the GFF carried out a mission in Burkina Faso. The purpose of the mission was to assist the NIPN team in preparing a workshop in Abidjan. This preparation focused on formulating research questions and strengthening collaboration among stakeholders.</p> <p>Two days were dedicated to collaboratively developing research questions with the NIPN team. Approximately ten questions were formulated to guide future work.</p> <p>The research questions addressed topics such as food security and child feeding practices.</p>
<a href="#">Cote d'Ivoire</a>  NIPN Platform	2019	<p>The main mission took place in the context of ongoing support to Côte d'Ivoire for implementing NIPN. Additionally, in 2025, the NIPN Niger platform team exchanged experiences with the Côte d'Ivoire team, aiming to simplify processes based on Niger's experience.</p> <p>The activity was conducted to support Côte d'Ivoire in preparing a workshop focused on formulating research questions with sectors contributing to nutrition. The broader objective was to strengthen the country team's capacity to coordinate multisectoral nutrition efforts.</p> <p>The mission achieved several outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of mapping sectoral and multisectoral nutrition plans, policies, and strategies underway in Côte d'Ivoire.</li> <li>• Analysis of the identified documents according to the indicators of the Multisectoral Nutrition Action Plan.</li> <li>• Identification and categorisation of opportunities for upcoming decision-making in the field of nutrition.</li> </ul>

Country	Year	Activities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of issues raised by nutrition thematic groups to guide the activities of the FNMIN.</li> <li>• Experience sharing between the NIPN Niger and Côte d'Ivoire teams, leading to process simplification in Côte d'Ivoire.</li> </ul>
<a href="#">Uganda</a>  NIPN Platform	2019	<p>The activity, the NIPN operationalisation cycle workshop was conducted from 24 to 27 June in Uganda.</p> <p>The workshop was organised to build capacity in NIPN operationalisation, foster multisectoral dialogue, and strengthen participants' skills in the NIPN Operational Cycle, especially in policy question development and data analysis. It aimed to identify strengths and areas for improvement, with a focus on practical application and sector engagement.</p> <p>The outcomes included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhanced capacity for NIPN operationalisation among participants.</li> <li>• Improved multisectoral dialogue and engagement.</li> <li>• Identification of strengths and areas needing improvement, particularly in data quality, practical application, and sector engagement.</li> <li>• Participants appreciated the interactive approach, clear presentations, and team engagement.</li> <li>• Requests for more time, resources, deeper coverage of data quality and repository topics, and additional practical application.</li> <li>• Suggestions for future workshops included making them residential, incorporating communication sessions, and offering Uganda-specific exercises.</li> </ul>
<a href="#">Zambia</a>  NIPN Platform	2023	<p>The workshop took place in Chisamba from August 14 to 17, bringing together 25 participants from various sectors. The activity was organised to facilitate the establishment of the National Information Platform for Nutrition (NIPN) in Zambia, with support from GIZ and C4N-NIPN. The main objectives were to identify key NIPN entities, strengthen the team's capacities, develop relevant policy questions, and formulate the inaugural work plan.</p> <p>The workshop achieved several outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy questions on nutrition were developed, covering topics such as stunting, interventions, funding, policy evaluation, obesity trends, and school nutrition programs.</li> <li>• Each question was accompanied by a matrix detailing data requirement, types of analysis, analytical tools, timelines, expected</li> </ul>

Country	Year	Activities
		<p>outputs, and target audiences. The matrices also included considerations regarding impact level, opportunities, capacity needs, and implementation strategies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The NIPN work plan was developed following the workshop.</li> <li>• Participants generally appreciated the interactive methodology, while noting time constraints and gaps in existing data.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mali</b></p> <p>NIPN4NIS technical assistance</p>	<p>2024</p>	<p>The workshop was conducted from October 29 to 31, in Sikasso, Mali. The activity was organised to build multisectoral capacity for nutrition policy question formulation. Recognising malnutrition as a barrier to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the workshop aimed to equip participants from various sectors with skills in context analysis, policy formulation, analytical frameworks, and secondary data analysis and interpretation.</p> <p>The main outcomes of the workshop were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thirty participants developed actionable policy questions and improved their autonomy in policy design.</li> <li>• The group outlined next steps, including disseminating findings, expanding training, sharing best practices, regulating cereal banks, refining analytical frameworks, prioritising questions, and seeking funding to address one or two of the questions formulated.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Madagascar</b></p> <p>NIPN4NIS technical assistance</p>	<p>2025</p>	<p>The activity was conducted in Antananarivo, Madagascar, from June 29 to July 19. The mission was organised by the National Office of Nutrition (ONN) in Madagascar, with support from C4N-NIPN and GFA Consulting, to train stakeholders – primarily women – in policy analysis and the development of nutrition-related research questions. The goal was to guide strategic planning and strengthen evidence-based decision-making in nutrition.</p> <p>The main results from this mission were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhanced capacity for evidence-based decision-making among participants.</li> <li>• Formulation of research questions focused on integrating nutrition into sectoral policies, budget tracking, dietary diversity, and interventions for chronic malnutrition.</li> <li>• Support from ministry officials to incorporate these achievements into the national nutrition strategic plan process.</li> </ul>

## 2.3 Lessons learnt

### 1. Multisectoral and data-driven approaches

Tackling malnutrition requires coordinated action across sectors such as health, education, agriculture, livestock, water, and environment. The NIPN initiative's multisectoral strategy and robust data systems are essential for addressing the complex causes of malnutrition and informing effective decision-making.

### 2. Strategic question formulation and prioritisation

Participatory processes were used to identify and refine key relevant nutrition policy questions, focusing on determinants of malnutrition, vulnerable populations, and intervention effectiveness.

### 3. Methodological rigor and acknowledgement of limitations

The PQF processes involved literature reviews, stakeholder consultations, and iterative refinement through the NIPN defined steps. However, challenges such as time constraints, incomplete stakeholder input and data gaps were recognised, affecting the depth of some analyses.

### 4. Continuous improvement, adaptation and simplification

The framework is designed to be iterative, with regular reviews and updates based on feedback and new data. This flexibility allows adaptation to changing contexts, such as the COVID-19 pandemic or evolving government priorities. Over time, the process evolved to prioritise fewer, more impactful questions, allowing for better communication and advocacy. With time and experience, the process can be simplified and less time consuming. As the coordination is getting stronger, it gets easier to know the key partners, the strategic priorities and to facilitate the discussions. The prioritisation of questions becomes easier, building on the experience of the previous cycle.

### 5. Advocacy, policy influence, and knowledge dissemination

Analytical outputs are intended to inform policymakers and drive policy change. Translating technical findings into accessible messages and organising dissemination events are key for influencing policy and program decisions.

### 6. Equity and regional disparities

Questions and analyses should focus on regional disparities in nutrition outcomes, aiming to inform targeted interventions for the most vulnerable populations.

### 7. Institutionalisation and sustainability

Institutionalising analytical and budgetary processes, such as regular budget analysis for nutrition, is emphasised to ensure sustainability and ongoing improvement.

## 2.4 Additional resources and materials

The following table presents additional online resources available with examples of data analysis questions and data analysis plans. It includes the policy questions and analytical frameworks produced by Niger and Ethiopia NIPN teams. Relevant documents are accessible through the links provided within the table.

Table 2. Examples of country policy questions and/or analysis frameworks

Country	Period	Policy questions and/or analysis framework
Niger	2025-2026	<a href="#">Quatrième Plan Cadre D'Analyse (PCA) 2025-2026 de la Plateforme Nationale d'Information pour Nutrition (PNIN)</a>
	2023-2024	<a href="#">Troisième plan cadre d'analyse (PCA) 2023-2024 de la plateforme nationale d'information pour la nutrition (PNIN)</a>
	2021-2022	<a href="#">Plan cadre d'analyse 2021-2022 de la Plateforme Nationale d'Information pour Nutrition (PNIN)</a>
	2019-2020	<a href="#">Plan cadre d'analyse 2019-2020 de la Plateforme Nationale d'Information pour Nutrition (PNIN)</a>
Ethiopia	2019-2020	<a href="#">The NIPN Policy Question Formulation Process January 2019 to March 2020</a>
Kenya	2020-2025	<a href="#">Policy Questions Repository</a>

### 3. Lessons from conducting multisectoral nutrition data mapping

As outlined in the third NIPN TGN '[Managing and Analysing Data](#)', nutrition data is scattered across a range of sectors (health, agriculture, gender, WASH, social protection, etc.) and sources (survey data, routine data, etc.). It is also fragmented across several organisations (national ministries, public institutions, international organisations, foundations, etc.), all of whom have different mandates, data sharing policies, management systems, and capacities.

As information systems are often fragmented, a [nutrition data mapping](#) is an essential preliminary step to understand the availability of existing data, facilitate data collection, perform analysis and monitoring of nutrition activities, and avoid duplication. A data mapping exercise is also crucial to carry out key activities like:

- data analysis on nutrition outcomes and drivers,
- monitoring of nutrition interventions, and
- monitoring of national plans and strategies.

This section on NIPN learnings is dedicated to lessons learnt from the experiences of NIPN platforms in carrying out data landscape or data mapping exercises.

#### 3.1 NIPN's offer

Nutrition data mapping exercises were conducted as one of the initial activities of all NIPN platforms. These exercises involve the following steps:

- Prioritise what nutrition-related information is needed.
- Identify the main data sources and providers in the country.
- Contact each data provider selected to understand their mandate, the kind of data they collect, and the data quality control methods they perform.
- Specify, for each data source, the data collection methodology, periodicity, the list of indicators measured, the storage processes, and the data sharing policy.
- Build a database of the available nutrition-related indicators and data sources.
- Take stock of key missing information.

### 3.2 NIPN experiences

Nutrition data mapping exercises have been central to better support the national Nutrition Information Systems. The data mapping studies were used for different purposes. Table 3 presents examples of how the nutrition data mapping was used in each NIPN platform to illustrate the practical added value of such studies.

*Table 3. Examples of uses of the Nutrition data mapping by NIPN platforms and online resources available*

Country	How was the nutrition data mapping used?	Resources available online
<a href="#">Burkina Faso</a> NIPN Platform	The data mapping exercise identified a long list of existing data sources that was used to monitor the indicators of the multisectoral nutrition plan. It was also useful to improve the collaboration across sectors for nutrition.	Data mapping exercise <a href="#">‘Catalogue des principales sources de données en nutrition au Burkina Faso’</a> (2020)  Lessons learnt on data mapping: <a href="#">‘Cartographie des données en nutrition : Étude de cas et leçons apprises’</a> (2020)
<b>Benin</b> NIPN4NIS technical assistance	A data mapping exercise was conducted to support the newly created National Food and Nutrition Agency (ANAN), in charge of multisectoral nutrition monitoring. The data mapping informed the national performance plan of the nutrition strategy.	No public link available

<p><a href="#">Côte d'Ivoire</a></p> <p>NIPN Platform</p>	<p>A data mapping exercise identified the data providers and data sources to inform the performance of the Nutrition Action Plan. Missing data was identified and helped to design the monitoring framework of the new National Multisectoral Nutrition Plan (2023-2026).</p>	<p>NIPN Webinar '<a href="#">Côte d'Ivoire: Strengthening the monitoring of a National Multisectoral Nutrition Plan</a>' presenting the NIPN experience in improving the nutrition M&amp;E framework in Côte d'Ivoire.</p>
<p><a href="#">Ethiopia</a></p> <p>NIPN Platform</p>	<p>The data mapping exercise collected information on more than sixty different data sources to identify reliable sources for monitoring and identifying data gaps.</p>	<p>Data Mapping report '<a href="#">Nutrition Data Mapping for Ethiopia: Assessment of the Availability and Accessibility of Nutrition-related Data</a>' (2021)</p>
<p><a href="#">Kenya</a></p> <p>NIPN Platform</p>	<p>The data mapping exercise was used by the National Bureau of Statistics to create a multisectoral dashboard of nutrition indicators at national and district level.</p>	<p>Data mapping report '<a href="#">Mapping and Harmonisation of Nutrition-Sensitive Indicators Across Sectors to Facilitate Food and Nutrition Security Monitoring and Evaluation Processes</a>' (2023)</p>
<p><a href="#">Lao PDR</a></p> <p>NIPN Platform</p>	<p>The data mapping exercise was used to create a <a href="#">nutrition data dashboard</a> and to build the capacity development strategy.</p>	<p>Data mapping report '<a href="#">Nutrition Data Mapping in Lao PDR</a>'</p>
<p><b>Madagascar</b></p> <p>NIPN4NIS technical assistance</p>	<p>A data mapping exercise was conducted to strengthen the monitoring of the national nutrition strategy: data sources to monitor the indicators were not precisely identified and the data mapping study helped to identify data sources and missing information.</p>	<p>No public link available</p>

<p><a href="#">Niger</a></p> <p>NIPN Platform</p>	<p>A data mapping exercise was used to build an online database of more than 300 nutrition related indicators. The database is updated every year and regularly used by data analysts.</p>	<p>Data mapping report '<a href="#">Overview of the Nutrition Information System in Niger</a>' (2019)</p> <p>Nutrition indicator database and <a href="#">dashboard</a></p>
<p><a href="#">Uganda</a></p> <p>NIPN Platform</p>	<p>A survey was conducted at district level, for prioritised districts, to identify the availability of key nutrition indicators and capacity needs.</p>	<p>Data mapping report '<a href="#">Overview of the Nutrition Information System in Uganda</a>' (2019)</p> <p><a href="#">Data Capacity Assessment Report</a> (2020)</p>

### 3.3 Lessons learnt

#### 1. Improve the monitoring of nutrition multisectoral plans

National nutrition multisectoral plans are monitored by a list of key indicators. Very often, the list of indicators is quite vast (100 to 200 indicators). Data sources are listed but often not verified. M&E officials can face a lot of difficulties to collect the information: some indicators listed do not exist, some definitions are sometimes not harmonised, and the data sources might not be updated regularly. Conducting a data mapping exercise helps identify which indicators are effectively collected and by which organisations. It provides a reality check on the information that is effectively available. Moreover, it is a key resource for decision makers when updating the monitoring plans to align as much as possible with existing information.

#### 2. Advocate for missing data and more efficient data collection

A data mapping exercise can help identify key missing information. Comparing the priorities of decision makers and the data that is effectively collected can spot missing information and support advocacy for more effective data collection. Indeed, other indicators can be collected by several data sources and are sometime redundant.

#### 3. Avoid duplication

Awareness of existing information systems across key sectors related to nutrition is often limited. In Ethiopia, for example, more than sixty different data sources have been identified as relevant for nutrition. Without a data mapping exercise, few stakeholders are aware of all the information available and can be tempted to collect data that is already available or create a data collection system that would duplicate an existing initiative. Instead of duplicating efforts, conducting a data mapping exercise helps to identify existing sectoral information systems and to support efforts to strengthen and build upon them.

#### 4. Planning takes time and resources

Data mapping exercises are complex and resource intensive. They quickly involve many organisations and data sources. It is important to clearly identify the scope of the data mapping and to establish priorities. In Niger, the NIPN team worked sector by sector, covering five sectors in a first phase and two additional sectors in a second phase. The data mapping became progressively more complete. In Madagascar, data sources were classified into three priority levels at the design stage of the mapping exercise. Conducting the exercise typically implies one or two interviews with each data provider, followed by several email exchanges.

#### 5. Building relationships and trust with data providers is crucial

The data mapping exercise has been identified as an opportunity for NIPN teams to build trust with data providers. The approach is not to ask them to inform nutrition indicators they may be not aware of, but rather to understand their system, their process to select indicators, collect the information and control the quality. With this information, the NIPN team could identify what could be strengthened and how the nutrition information system could adapt to the sectoral information systems. The data mapping exercise is a first step to enhance collaboration and to strengthen multisectoral coordination. Sharing of data has been an important challenge for NIPN platforms in countries with limited data sharing policies. Building trust with data providers helps to build collaboration, to value the work of all stakeholders involved and to facilitate exchange of data.

#### 6. Need of regular updates

The initial data mapping is resource intensive, but it also needs to be updated as new data becomes available. The list of data sources usually remains unchanged, but the years of data collection and the lists of indicators need to be updated every two to three years. The updating exercise is much less resource intensive than the initial data mapping.

### 3.4 Additional resources and materials

Other resources are available online to conduct a nutrition data mapping. The C4N-NIPN global coordination team developed specific guidance notes that are available on the NIPN website. WHO and UNICEF have produced a related technical note on nutrition data value chain. Table 4 provides references of additional resources.

*Table 4. Data mapping online resources*

Author	Resource
C4N-NIPN Global Coordination	<a href="#">Technical Guidance Notes for conducting a nutrition data mapping</a> – Sections 3-1
WHO / UNICEF	Technical Note <a href="#">‘National Nutrition Information System: Nutrition Data Value Chain’</a>

## 4. Lessons from strengthening data analysis using the Lives Saved Tool (LiST)

Strategies grounded in systematic analysis of evidence can significantly accelerate progress towards the nutrition-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In resource-constrained settings, [modelling tools](#) can support decision-makers in identifying and prioritising interventions to reduce morbidity and mortality among women and children. These tools can also help inform the development and evaluation of multisectoral nutrition action plans and facilitate more efficient resource allocation.

Lives Saved Tool (LiST) is a modelling tool frequently used in NIPN countries. It is a mathematical model that calculates the impact of a change in intervention coverage on intervention-sensitive causes of mortality using the following formula:

$$\text{Impact} = \text{Change in intervention coverage} * \text{Effectiveness} * \text{Fraction affected}$$

Impact is calculated by reassessing the input sensitive to an intervention or package of interventions following the scaling up of the intervention or package of interventions between the base year and the target year.

This section on NIPN learnings is dedicated to lessons learnt from the experiences of NIPN platforms in using the LiST for retrospective analysis (impact evaluation), prospective analysis (strategic planning), and advocacy in nutrition.

### 4.1 NIPN's offer

NIPN Global Coordination has provided [LiST capacity building](#) to public officials from nutrition line ministries and other multisectoral stakeholders. This support has included training sessions on LiST's functions, as well as its practical application for strategic planning, advocacy and evaluation of national nutrition strategic plans nutrition intervention's impact.

### 4.2 NIPN experiences

Table 5 presents examples of the activities conducted between 2021 and 2025 in NIPN platforms and other partner countries through NIPN4NIS. It provides an overview of strategic planning, impact evaluation, and capacity-building initiatives related to nutrition interventions implemented in various African countries.

The activities primarily utilised the LiST for evidence-based strategic planning and advocacy, with training delivered to stakeholders from ministries and national agencies. Participants from multiple countries developed both practical and theoretical expertise in nutrition planning, with a strong emphasis on cross-sector collaboration and data-informed decision-making. Group sizes ranged from 11 to 34 individuals.

Table 5. LiST activities across the NIPN community

Country	Year	Activities
<a href="#">Côte d'Ivoire</a> NIPN Platform	2021	<p><b>Strategic planning:</b> Prepare high-impact intervention packages to guide the planning process for reducing chronic malnutrition in children under five years of age between 2022 and 2026.</p> <p><b>Capacity building:</b> 16 participants from nutrition line ministries.</p>
<a href="#">Burkina Faso</a> NIPN Platform	2021	<p><b>Impact evaluation:</b> The principal objective of the training was to enable the Burkina Faso team to understand how LiST functions and to allow them to use it for impact modelling and strategic planning in the field of Maternal, Neonatal, Child, and Adolescent Health &amp; Nutrition. More specifically, it aimed to assess the impact of the country's multisectoral strategic nutrition plan from 2020 to 2024 on <i>stunting and U5 survive</i>.</p> <p><b>Capacity building:</b> 24 participants from lines ministries have been trained to use LiST for strategic planning and impact evaluation.</p>
<a href="#">Côte d'Ivoire</a> NIPN Platform	2022	<p><b>Strategic planning:</b> Estimate the costs of the six intervention packages and prioritise two packages to be presented to decision-makers.</p> <p><b>Capacity building:</b> 17 participants from nutrition line ministries.</p>
<a href="#">Niger</a> NIPN Platform	2023	<p><b>Impact evaluation:</b> Train participants in the theoretical concepts of the LiST modelling approach.</p> <p>Estimate the impact of achieving the Action Plan of the National Nutritional Security Policy (PNSN AP) nutrition intervention coverage targets on survival and stunting in children under five years of age.</p> <p><b>Capacity building:</b> 13 participants.</p>
Zambia NIPN Platform	2024	<p><b>Capacity building:</b> The general objective of the LiST training was to increase awareness and capacity regarding the practical use of the tools in strategic planning, impact analysis and advocacy among NIPN team and partners. 17 participants from nutrition line ministries were trained.</p>
Madagascar NIPN4NIS technical assistance	2024	<p><b>Capacity building:</b> The objective was to train multisectoral stakeholders in the use of the LiST modelling tool for strategic planning, impact evaluation, and advocacy. More specifically it aimed at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to train participants in the theoretical concepts of the LiST modelling approach.</li> </ul>

Country	Year	Activities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to conduct practical exercises with the LiST tool (software) for impact modelling and strategic planning using Madagascar’s nutrition strategic plan.</li> <li>to discuss the key steps required for impact-oriented strategic planning.</li> <li>to identify the main weaknesses in current practices of strategic planning in the field of nutrition.</li> <li>18 participants.</li> </ul>
<b>Mali</b> NIPN4NIS technical assistance	2024	<p><b>Capacity building:</b></p> <p>The objective of the training was to empower multi-sectoral stakeholders' ability to use LiST for strategic planning, impact evaluation, and advocacy. More specifically, it aimed at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>train participants in the theoretical concepts of the LiST modelling approach.</li> <li>carry out practical exercises using the LiST tool (software) for impact modelling and strategic planning, utilising the ongoing Mali national multisectoral nutrition plan.</li> <li>34 participants.</li> </ul>
<a href="#">Uganda</a> NIPN Platform	2025	<p><b>Impact evaluation:</b> The training’s main goal was to reinforce and promote evidence-based decision-making in nutrition. The specific objectives were to build the capacity of NIPN Uganda team capacity in using LiST:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to assess the Uganda Nutrition Action Plan II (UNAP I) impact on stunting and U5 mortality.</li> <li>to prioritise impacting nutrition interventions in achieving goals in terms of stunting reduction, wasting reduction, birth outcomes, etc. to cost nutrition interventions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Capacity building:</b> 16 participants were trained from key national institutions (Ministry of Local Government, National Planning Authority, Office of the Prime Minister, Uganda Bureau of Statistics, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, Ministry of Health and UNICEF)</p>
<b>Zambia</b> NIPN Platform	2025	<p><b>Strategic planning:</b> The primary aim of the training was to build capacity to respond to the policy request from the Government of the Republic of Zambia. The mission focused on preparing LiST trainers within the NIPN Zambia team. Key objectives were to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a LiST training session for a wider audience.</li> </ul>

Country	Year	Activities
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Perform a LiST analysis addressing a specific NIPN Zambia policy question.</li> </ul> <p><b>Capacity building:</b> A total of 16 participants representing major Zambian institutions, including National Food and Nutrition Commission, Zambia Statistics Agency, and University of Zambia successfully completed the training.</p>
Benin NIPN4NIS technical assistance	2025	<p><b>Capacity building:</b> The general objective of the training was to strengthen the capacities of Beninese working in the field of nutrition on the LiST tool. The specific objectives were to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Train participants in the theoretical concepts of the modelling approach with LiST.</li> <li>Take stock of nutrition interventions with known effect sizes currently reflected in Benin' policy documents.</li> <li>Conduct practical exercises using LiST tool (software) for impact evaluation and prioritisation of interventions in the context of Benin.</li> <li>Propose ways to improve the current process of prioritising interventions.</li> </ul> <p>11 participants were trained from National Agency for Food and Nutrition (ANAN), General Secretariat of the Presidency (SGPR), Catholic relief services (CRS) and International Bureau of Research for Economic and Social Development (BIRDES).</p>
Madagascar NIPN4NIS technical assistance	2025	<p><b>Capacity building:</b> The main goal of the mission was to consolidate the of 2024 LiST training accomplishments for impact evaluation, strategic planning and advocacy. More specifically, the training meant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand and enhance LiST training</li> <li>Train participants in the use of LiST Visualiser and the Missed Opportunities tool to prioritise interventions and support advocacy efforts.</li> <li>Review the essential steps required for strategic planning focused on impact.</li> <li>Identify major weaknesses in the practice of strategic nutrition planning in Madagascar.</li> <li>Develop scenarios to guide the preparation of the future strategic nutrition plan.</li> </ul>

Country	Year	Activities
		24 participants from the National Office of Nutrition (ONN), Nutrition Service / Ministry of Public Health (MINSANP), Ministry of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, Ministry of National Education, Ministry of Fisheries and Blue Economy, Ministry of Population and Solidarity, National Community Nutrition Program Unit.
Mali NIPN4NIS technical assistance	2025	<p><b>Capacity building:</b> The overall objective of this activity was to train LiST trainers among actors from ministries and multi-sectoral nutrition partners in Mali. The specific objectives assigned to the activity were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train participants in the theoretical concepts of the modelling approach with LiST.</li> <li>• Train participants in the use of LiST Visualiser.</li> <li>• Carry out practical work on the LiST tool (software) for impact modelling and strategic planning.</li> <li>• Train participants in the use of LiST add-ons.</li> </ul> <p>12 participants from key nutrition line ministries were trained.</p>
<b>Summary</b>		
<p><b>Training/Capacity building: #12</b></p> <p><b>Strategic planning sessions: #3</b></p> <p><b>Impact evaluation sessions: #3</b></p> <p><b>Total personnel capacity built: #218 country nutrition actors' capacities have been built</b></p>		

### 4.3 Lessons learnt

#### 1. Data quality and availability

The effectiveness of the LiST tool for planning and evaluating nutrition interventions depends on the availability and quality of national data, particularly from household surveys like DHS and MICS surveys. Strengthening data collection and access systems is essential for reliable analysis and rigorous monitoring.

#### 2. Coherence across sectors

Strategic plans across different sectors such as health, agriculture, and WASH must be coherent and complementary to maximise the impact of interventions. Improved sectoral data quality is also needed for effective monitoring and evaluation.

### 3. Evidence-based modelling and decision-making

None of the nutrition multisectoral action plans reviewed systematically used evidence to guide the prioritisation of interventions or the setting of targets. The use of LiST allows teams to model scenarios, assess impacts, and prioritise cost-effective strategies, supporting informed policy decisions and optimal resource use. This approach highlights the need for rigorous scientific methods over experience or political intent alone.

### 4. Capacity building and training

Capacity building by means of targeted technical training and practical exercises enhances the capabilities of local teams in data analysis, impact modelling, and planning. After the training is completed, most participants feel confident in using LiST and are committed to applying it in future strategies. Nonetheless, it is essential to provide post-training support and mentorship to ensure effective implementation. Furthermore, it is advisable to maintain consistent internet connectivity during LiST trainings and incorporate informational sessions prior to the training to enhance awareness and support wider implementation of LiST.

### 5. Actionable recommendations and realistic target-setting

Recommendations focus on implementing high-impact interventions (such as zinc supplementation) and prioritising a core package of interventions for efficiency. Projections and targets must be adapted to local context and operational capacity, using complementary tools as needed. Achieving ambitious goals requires realistic timelines and sustained efforts, supported by clear action plans and accountability.

## 4.4 Additional resources and materials

The resources and reference materials presented in Tables 6 and 7 provide access to practical guidance, capacity building resources, and evidence generated through the application of LiST across different contexts. They bring together existing online tutorials, webinars, and technical documents, as well as country training reports, analytical studies, and research articles developed within NIPN platforms and partner countries.

*Table 6. Online LiST resources*

Material	Source
LiST software/Spectrum	<a href="https://www.livessavedtool.org/listspectrum">https://www.livessavedtool.org/listspectrum</a>
LiST online	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MAkUDtb024">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MAkUDtb024</a>
Introduction to LiST	<a href="https://www.livessavedtool.org/presentations">https://www.livessavedtool.org/presentations</a>
Calculation impact in LiST	<a href="https://www.livessavedtool.org/webinars">https://www.livessavedtool.org/webinars</a>
LiST visualiser	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=secCdn-YbEo">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=secCdn-YbEo</a>

Nutrition modelling in LiST	<a href="https://www.livessavedtool.org/presentations">https://www.livessavedtool.org/presentations</a>
Missed opportunity	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1kDPVU0-n9s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1kDPVU0-n9s</a>
Subnational modelling	<a href="https://www.livessavedtool.org/presentations">https://www.livessavedtool.org/presentations</a>
LiST costing	<a href="https://www.livessavedtool.org/presentations">https://www.livessavedtool.org/presentations</a>

Table 7. LiST training materials and analysis reports

Type of Document	Countries involved	Context
Training report	Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Niger, Zambia, Uganda, Mali, Benin, Madagascar	<p><b>Strategic planning:</b> for Cote d'Ivoire, Uganda and Zambia</p> <p><b>Impact evaluation:</b> Burkina Faso, Niger, Uganda</p> <p><b>ToT:</b> Niger, Mali</p> <p><b>LiST Training:</b> Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Niger, Zambia, Uganda, Mali Benin, Madagascar</p>
Analysis report	Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Niger, Zambia, Uganda	<p><b>Cote d'Ivoire:</b> Building impactful nutrition intervention packages to inform the strategic plan formulation</p> <p><b>Uganda:</b> Assess UNAP II impact and orient the formulation of the UNAP III</p> <p><b>Zambia:</b> Build scenario to achieving specific stunting rate by 2030</p> <p><b>Burkina Faso:</b> Assess the 2020-2024 nutrition strategic plan impact on stunting and U5 survival</p> <p><b>Niger:</b> Assess the 2021-2025 PA PNSN impact on stunting and U5 survival</p>

## 5. Conclusions

The experiences described in this document provide practical examples of the implementation of the NIPN approach to contribute to stakeholder engagement, capacity building and system strengthening, with the goal of informing robust and coordinated nutrition policies and programmes.

Countries that invested in formulating clear and context-specific nutrition questions improved collaboration, analytical capacity, and policy relevance. At the same time, these experiences show the importance of maintaining flexibility by including both policy and programmatic questions, grounding the process in available data, and planning for continuity within national teams. This balanced and

adaptive approach has enabled NIPN platforms to evolve into responsive and evidence-driven mechanisms.

Multisectoral nutrition data mapping has also proved to be an important step in strengthening national systems. By providing a comprehensive overview of fragmented data landscapes, this exercise helps countries identify gaps, reduce duplication, and build trust among stakeholders. While this exercise can be resource intensive, data mapping supports more coherent monitoring frameworks and lays the foundation for stronger multisectoral collaboration. Countries can optimise this process by building on existing NIPN experiences and ensuring regular updates.

In parallel, the use of LiST has helped countries conduct robust data analysis and inform strategic planning. Through training and practical application, national stakeholders have improved their ability to model intervention impacts, prioritise actions, and define realistic targets. These experiences underline the importance of having access to high-quality data, investing in multisectoral alignment and in sustained capacity building to ensure that these skills are maintained over time. They also show the need to complement technical tools with actionable recommendations that reflect national contexts.

Taken together, these lessons suggest that the implementation of the NIPN approach can be more effective when countries invest in strong data systems, inclusive processes, and national capacities. Countries that prioritise data quality and availability, foster collaboration across sectors, and institutionalise learning processes position themselves to make more informed and impactful nutrition decisions.